



PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

ENSURE LEARNING AND SUCCESS FOR EACH STUDENT BY PROVIDING A QUALITY EDUCATION

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Feb. 7, 2017

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Zamboni Middle School AVID Students Get Taste of College Life During Visit to USC

Paramount, CA – Frank J. Zamboni Middle School students enrolled in a college-readiness program gained a taste of college life during a guided tour of the University of Southern California on Jan. 23, posing questions to students, receiving USC lanyards and lunching in a dining hall.

Nearly 50 Zamboni seventh- and eighth-grade students in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program visited the Rossier School of Education, the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the John McKay Center and the USC Book Store.

“Zamboni students are ambitious and eager to succeed,” Zamboni Principal Sue Saikaly said. “Our AVID students travel as a cohort. They have grown together and have learned to positively motivate and assist each other in achieving.”

AVID is a two-day-a-week elective that prepares students for the rigors of secondary and higher education coursework. AVID students develop habits and skills that increase their ability to process knowledge, and learn strategies for effective reading, writing, thinking and speaking.

The goal of AVID students is to meet or exceed high school graduation requirements and to complete all UC/CSU entrance requirements. AVID students also receive assistance with college applications and enrollment.

Zamboni students found themselves well prepared for their visit to USC, asking student guides questions about the quality of life at a big university, inquiring about the size of the student body and the cost of residing in dormitories.

The students received a wake-up call while perusing textbooks and school apparel at the book store, noting that attending college involves expenses well beyond tuition and nutrition.

“The students were a bit surprised at how expensive things were,” Zamboni AVID coordinator

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Tamara Calero-Hill said. "But that just makes them more determined to acquire the skills necessary to attend a four-year university. When they received pens and lanyards from the journalism school they were so excited. It made them feel like they were already attending college."

AVID students have good reason to believe they will matriculate to college. AVID elective students complete four-year college entrance requirements at a rate at least twice the national average. In 2014, 91 percent of AVID elective seniors enrolled in two- or four-year colleges and universities, with 61 percent enrolling in four-year schools.

"Paramount Unified School District is committed to closing the achievement gap and giving all of our students the opportunity to fulfill their dream of a college education," PUSD Superintendent Dr. Ruth Pérez said. "Our AVID program is staffed with the finest educators in their field, who work tirelessly to help our students to acquire the skills necessary to turn those dreams into reality."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

020717_PARAMOUNT_AVID1: Frank J. Zamboni Middle School AVID students get a taste of college life during a guided tour of the University of Southern California on Jan. 23.

020717_PARAMOUNT_AVID2: Two Frank J. Zamboni AVID students take a guided tour of the University of Southern California on Jan. 23. AVID students complete four-year college entrance requirements at a rate at least twice the national average.

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